

ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 8th March 2016

Time: 10.00a.m. to 11.40p.m.

Present: Councillors: R Butcher (substitute for Councillor Bates), E Cearns (Vice-Chairman and Chairman for the meeting in the absence of Councillor Bates), D Connor (substitute for Councillor Clark), L Harford, R Henson, N Kavanagh, A Layman, M Mason, M McGuire, J Schumann, M Shuter, A Walsh and J Williams.

Apologies: Councillors I Bates and J Clark.

194. MINUTES AND ACTION LOG

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th January were agreed as a correct record.

In discussion on the actions included on the action log the following updates to the published report were orally provided:

- a) Minute 140 – Northstowe Phase 2 – Section 106 Heads of Terms – In respect of the ongoing negotiations, as an information update the Vice Chairman orally reported that there was to be a reconvened meeting of the 4x4 Group to further discuss issues concerning affordable / starter homes.
- b) Minute 175 – ‘Transport Strategy for East Cambridgeshire – Draft for Consultation’ – an update had been sent to local members and the Committee on 2nd March from the lead officer providing further information on the consultation which now had a revised closing date for responses of 8th April 2016.
- c) Greater Cambridge City Deal Executive Board Delegations – An advice note on Elected Member involvement was emailed to all County Councillors on 7th March setting out how Councillors in the County Council and the two district councils would be kept up to date with, and be able to engage with and influence the City Deal’s programme of work. It also set out details of the following two briefing sessions being held to which members of all three Councils were welcome to attend:

18.00 on 29th March at the Guildhall, Cambridge
10.30 on 9th September at Shire Hall, Cambridge
- d) Land acquisition and Licence agreements to allow construction to commence to Yaxley to Farcet cycle path – An update was e-mailed to Councillor McGuire on 29th January which indicated that the issues still remained outstanding despite chasers being issued. A hard copy of the email was later placed in Councillor Henson’s pigeon hole at Shire Hall. In response, both Members expressed their frustrations at the continued delay, for which there had not been progress for over two years and with it having been over a year since the Compulsory Purchase Order was agreed (Note: agreed at the October 2014 Committee

meeting) . One of them highlighted the current risks for people walking along the path being seriously injured or worse from passing vehicles. Officers were requested to make the Members concerns at the unacceptable delay known to the solicitors involved, with the aim of progressing the necessary land purchase as a matter of priority. **Action**

Members comments in respect of the information provided in the Minutes Action Log included:

- In relation to the Renewal of the Cambridge Quality Bus Partnership, one Member queried whether, as the City Deal Board would be making decisions on measures to reduce congestion and pollution, it should also be a signatory to any new agreement. Officers agreed to look into this further and report back. **Action**
- Requesting that further to the update provided on the budget line 'Discover Cambs Tourism' Brochure that the information unavailable at the time the original response (the breakdown of the allocation to be provided in year 1 to each district) should be circulated following the meeting. **Action**
- With reference to the response provided on Minute 186. 'Cherry Hinton High Street Approval of Contract' and the fact that the County Council did not have a specific policy on replacing trees (*Clarification Note: Appendix 1 of the log explained that this was as there had never been a budget and set out the constraints on the County Council's responsibilities*) in discussion, several Members made reference to incidents of trees being cut down in conservation areas where replacements had not been provided and where the parish council had not received prior notice or guidance on replacement. Reference was made to three trees having been removed by a private individual from Cottenham Green. One Member suggested a review should be undertaken on the process involved to see if lessons could be learned. In response to a further question it was indicated that the current response could be provided more widely as guidance to parish councils. In further discussion, Members considered that specific policy guidance was required on tree replacement that could be provided to individuals / parish councils, including what species of trees could be planted in their place, (to ensure no damage to highways / footways) and agreed to ask the Executive Director to refer the issues raised to Highway and Community Infrastructure Committee for further consideration as the appropriate Committee. **Action**

It was resolved:

To note the updates on the Minutes Action Log.

195. PETITIONS

There were no petitions to be considered.

196. BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

This report introduced 'Stronger Together – Cambridgeshire's Strategy for building

resilient communities Strategy and sought the Committee's views on the actions being undertaken in support of the Strategy.

The Strategy had been created in response to the enormous challenges the public sector would be facing in the next few years with rising demand, together with significantly reduced resources making the redesign of public services imperative as services could no longer be delivered in the current way. The report suggested that a growing body of research and evidence showed that local community-based support could be more effective in supporting some vulnerable people – and better at preventing some of the crises which necessitate costly Council services. There is evidence to show that this approach can deliver improved services for less money.

The Strategy proposed the following six areas of activity with the report providing an explanation of what the workstream aimed to achieve and the activity planned:

- Communication
- People helping people
- Council members
- Our workforce
- Community spaces
- Partnerships

A table within the report identified the key areas within Economy, Transport and Environment (ETE) Services with details of the ongoing community resilience activity designed to strengthen communities and help to enable individuals to live independently for longer with greater wellbeing. Descriptions of each of the services listed were set out in Appendix A of the report. The report highlighted that a Highway Maintenance Member Steering Group established to identify tasks which could be undertaken by communities, had identified the following four key areas of focus:

- Siding out footways/cycleways
- Cutting back over hanging vegetation
- Cleaning signs
- Litter picking

Comments / queries from Members of the Committee included:

- Concerns being expressed by some Members that the Strategy could be seen as away of replacing professional officers by unpaid volunteers due to budgetary pressures and that this raised issues of accountability and also in respect of potential safeguarding issues if working with vulnerable adults or children. In response, the lead officer stated that the intention was not to replace professional staff in specialist services required by statute, but to build voluntary capacity in simple task areas such as certain low risk highways activities and to provide community based support to help, for example, people living on their own.
- highlighting that information provided from parish clerks to relevant local councillors varied greatly between different parishes, with a member asking if

local councillors could be sent the same information as was being passed to parishes.

- One Member queried the statement included under Equality and Diversity Implications reading: 'Evidence indicates that services delivered by local people within local communities can be more successful than statutory services at reaching people who may need support' stating that he would wish to see the evidence behind such a statement.
- One Member expressed the hope that the workshops referred to in the report would take account of the inspirational work undertaken by the Transforming Lives Innovation site in East Cambridgeshire. It was confirmed that this would be looked into and fed back. The Vice Chairman made the point that it was important to see community resilience work as a partnership between officers, local members and voluntary organisations, volunteers.
- One Member highlighted that in his area the issue of concern was different work practices in respect of cross border working. An example cited being an emergency doctor called out at a weekend from a Suffolk practice having no notes / information on the patient's medical history, which had led to the person being prescribed an antibiotic that they were allergic to.
- Smaller parish councils would not have the resources available to undertake voluntary activities being undertaken by larger parishes. Examples provided were the installation of moveable shelving in a library and organising regular minibuses

Having commented it was resolved:

to support the Community Resilience Strategy.

197. PROGRESS UPDATE AND NEXT STAGE OF CONNECTING CAMBRIDGESHIRE PROGRAMME

The purpose of this report was to outline the progress of the Connecting Cambridgeshire Superfast Broadband rollout to date and seek approval for a follow on phase. The Committee was reminded that a contract signed with BT in early 2013 had been to deliver connectivity by December 2015 to deliver Superfast Broadband infrastructure to areas that would otherwise not benefit from commercial rollout – approximately a third of the County involving 97,000 homes and businesses. The report stated that this had been concluded on time and within budget resulting in combined coverage estimated at 93%.

As a result of the original market consultation exercise producing an overstatement of coverage and the high level of housing growth in Cambridgeshire over the last 2-3 years, the percentage of harder to reach homes had increased. A follow on £4m Phase Two rollout had led to a further 6,000 premises being able to be incorporated by September 2017 and was anticipated to deliver Superfast coverage to 95% of homes and businesses across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Although the current Superfast coverage in Cambridgeshire exceeded that in most of the surrounding counties, the heavy reliance on and high take up of Superfast broadband services amongst businesses and residents in Cambridgeshire has resulted in significant pressure to provide a similar service for the “final 5%” (approximately 18,000 premises) which are not covered in current rollout plans.

The report highlighted that whilst it was unrealistic to target 100% of premises, it was possible to significantly reduce the “final 5%” with a third rollout phase from two sources of funding available to support this (£5.3m from a claw-back or “gain-share” condition within the contract - requiring BT to reinvest any surplus profits into further broadband rollout -and an anticipated underspend of £2.8m in the deployment of Phase One). In response to a question it was confirmed that as a result of these funding sources, the County Council would not be required to provide any additional funding for this proposed third phase to the original capital funding already allocated for Phases Two and Phase Three of £3m from Peterborough City Council and £20m from the County Council.

It was anticipated that this further third deployment phase would deliver Superfast Broadband to at least 7,500 additional premises, with fibre based broadband (typically between 10-15mbps) increasing the combined Superfast coverage to around 97% of the County. In respect of this proposed third phase, BT would be asked to target the overall number of premises to be covered in a community, rather than on their preferred deployment approach. This would ensure it targeted the greatest numbers first and ensure a visibly transparent and fair prioritisation approach.

Committee Members comments included:

- The local Member for Fulbourn queried the contention that Phase 1 coverage had been concluded successfully, citing for example Horningsea and Little Wilbraham amongst others, as places which were still not receiving full fibre optic coverage as the speed in the latter depended on how near properties were to an exchange box. It was explained in response that the original two phases concentrated on providing coverage to the greatest number of premises rather than providing the same level of service to everyone in one of the targeted communities. In the particular case of Horningsea, the delay to service delivery was caused by problems with securing agreement to wayleaves over private land and issues with Network Rail authorising the necessary access to the ducts under the railway crossing.
- Highlighting that going forward better communication was required so that people understood what was being provided through the BT contract and what alternative solutions might be available. Officers agreed that the communication in the past had not been as clear as it could have been, and agreed that what was required for the next phase was to make clear the service that could be offered and providing details of alternatives that they might wish to pursue themselves.
- A query was raised regarding press reports of BT’s monopoly being potentially broken up and the implications of this on funding a third phase. In response it was

explained that Ofcom(The Office for Communications) had decided against this,but had required BT to make its infrastructure more widely available. There were no implications to the current contractual arrangements with the money ringfenced to delivery.

- One Member queried the text on page 49 in para 4.4. reading “A 30 public consultation...”It was clarified that the word ‘day’ was missing and it should have read “A 30 day consultation.....” which was a statutory requirement to ensure appropriate use was being made of public funds.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Note the progress of the Connecting Cambridgeshire Programme to date
- b) Endorse the ambition to enable access to Superfast broadband services to as many premises within the “final 5%” across Cambridgeshire as possible within the existing investment allocation.
- c) Support an amended deployment approach, which will prioritise the follow on roll-out in order of the number of premises impacted.
- d) Approve the commencement of a further phase of Superfast Broadband deployment for Cambridgeshire

198. REVIEW OF ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR 2016/17 FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT

Further to the Key Performance Indicators for the 2016/17 Strategic Framework having been approved by Economy & Environment (E&E) Committee on 19th January 2016 this report set out details of the review of the remaining, “lower level”, E & E indicators for inclusion in the ETE Finance and Performance (F&P) report to ensure that each indicator linked to at least one of the Operating Model outcomes or enablers which were detailed in the report.

The report sought approval to remove the Wider Outcomes of Adult Learning Indicator from the ETE F & P report for 2016/17 for the reasons set out in the report while explaining that there were no specific proposals for any new E & E indicators. The proposed set of 2016/17 E & E performance indicators for the ETE F & P report were attached as Appendix A to the report.

An update was provided to the request at the 19th January Committee on whether it was more appropriate to change the age group for the performance indicator on the proportion of Cambridgeshire residents in employment from ‘16-64’ to ‘18-64’ to reflect the change in the law requiring people to undergo education or training until the age of 18. It was clarified that having contacted the Office for National Statistics (ONS) they had advised that there were currently no plans to change the 16-64 age range for the indicator, with no separate figures published for 16 to 17 year-olds. As a result, it was not possible to derive an employment rate for 18-64 year-olds from the available ONS data and officers advised that it would be prohibitively expensive for the Council to

undertake a separate survey of Cambridgeshire residents.

Members' comments included:

- With reference to the periods shown on some of the performance indicators one Member highlighted that some of the information was very out of date, for example the measure of 'the average journey time per mile during the morning peak on the most congested routes' which was showing data for the period ending 31st August 2013. In response it was indicated that the figures were derived from Traffic Master data provided by the Department of Transport and that new software had recently been purchased to analyse the data and it was hoped to provide updated figures for the May report.
- One Member queried the staff sickness figure for ETE shown on page 5 of the report reading "4.63 days per full time equivalent employee" and asked whether this compared favourably to other public sector organisations. In reply it was confirmed that it was believed it did with the average for the County Council overall being 6 days per full time equivalent employee. Another Member, whilst agreeing that she believed the figure was favourable, was concerned that it might mask a small number of people on long term sickness or those taking repetitive single days absence which was often a sign of stress. Officers in response agreed to provide more information in future regarding how the average figure had been arrived at. **Action**

Having commented, it was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Approve the proposed Economy and Environment key performance indicators for the 2016-17 Finance and Performance Report as set out in Appendix A of the officer's report.
- b) Approve continuing to base the employment rate indicator on the 16-64 age group as outlined in Section 3 of the report.

199. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT – JANUARY 2016

This report provided the Committee with an opportunity to comment on the projected financial and performance outturn position as at the end of January 2016.

The key issues highlighted were:

- at the end of January, ETE as a whole was forecasting a year-end underspend on revenue of £1.266m.
- At the end of January, ETE was forecasting an underspend on Capital of £37.1m with two changes highlighted since the last Committee in relation to Huntingdon-West of Town Centre Link Road and Ely Crossing as set out in paragraph 2.4 of the report.

In relation to the twelve E&E Committee performance indicators set for 2015-16, one was currently showing as red, one as amber and ten green. The indicator currently red

was the 'the number of local bus passenger journeys originating in the authority area'. The current forecast for year-end, was that none of the indicators would be red, seven would be amber and five green.

Members raised issues including:

- requesting clarification regarding the entries in respect of Cambridge North Station which showed £4m in the Capital expenditure table on appendix 6 and spend of £178k in Appendix 4 – 'Virements and Budget Reconciliation' table. It was explained that the latter related to the residual amount to cover the cost of providing busway and cycle access. The £4m equated to spend in the previous year, with confirmation that although the timing of the scheme being handed over to Network Rail had resulted in the scheme remaining in the 2015/16 Business Plan, the County Council would not be incurring any further expenditure.
- In respect of the Ely Crossing scheme one Member enquired on the progress of the Business case with the Department for Transport. In response it was reported that the department would not confirm the business case until the tender process had been completed.
- One Member highlighted the issue of slippage and the potential reputational damage of not carrying out schemes included in the programme. It was suggested that if slippage did result in financial implications, it would be helpful to have them highlighted. In reply it was clarified that not all monies unspent was slippage, with Cambridge North Station being an example of money that had been allocated, but subsequently not needed. In addition, a substantial proportion of slippage money was from external funding sources and would not financially impinge on budgets. Officers had recognised the need to improve spend profile forecasts and as a result, a team led by Chris Malyon were looking at ways to improve these going forward. The point of keeping Members informed, where slippage would have a financial impact, would be taken on board as part of future update reports. **Action**

It was unanimously resolved:

To note the report.

200. ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE TRAINING PLAN

The Committee was asked to note the a Committee Training Plan, consider whether invites to listed sessions should be extended to other Committee and make suggestions for further training in respect of the work of the Committee, either at the meeting or passed on to officers following the meeting.

The Vice Chairman highlighted that the equality and diversity training sessions previously undertaken, while helpful in explaining the legal background, did not provide enough information on equality implications for services under ETE. It was suggested going forward there was a need for such training to look at the implications of policies and potential decisions on specific groups. He suggested it would also be useful to provide input from affected groups and consider using the Council's Cambridgeshire

Race, Equality and Diversity Service (CREDS) to help deliver and co-ordinate this aspect of the training.

In further discussion it was also suggested that to help Members in making choices on future training seminars, officers should provide examples of topics that could be offered for further training, including forthcoming legislation and how the transformation agenda would impact on services under the remit of the Economy and Environment Committee.

One member wished to place on record his appreciation to the officers of the New Communities seminar which he had found particularly useful.

It was resolved unanimously:

- a) to note the future training sessions as listed in appendix one.
- b) In respect of the request for Members to put forward further ETE training sessions to be arranged during 2016-17, officers were asked to consider new legislative requirements and the impact of the council's emerging transformation programme which would impact on the work of the Committee and circulate suggestions outside of the meeting.
- c) that equality and diversity implications included in future training sessions should be widened beyond addressing legal requirements to include illustrations of the impact of decisions on client groups
- d) To note the need to sign an attendance sheet when attending training sessions, so that their attendance is accurately recorded.

201. ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE SERVICE COMMITTEE AGENDA PLAN

One Member when considering the Agenda Plan raised the issue of how information on decisions made by the City Deal Board would be circulated. In response it was explained that all of the decisions were published and available for public viewing in the form of both a decision summary and agreed minutes on the City Deal website. Rather than providing reports to committee / spokes this would be achieved by providing the appropriate links.

In response to a query on why the Flood and Water Supplementary Planning document had been moved back to the July Committee meeting, it was confirmed that this was in order to receive further feedback from district councils.

It was resolved unanimously to note the following changes have been made to the Forward Plan since publication:

- Addition to April meeting: Key decision report on Allocations of Integrated Transport Block and Residual Capital

- Additional reports for the 24th May: Key Decision report on Concessionary Fares and Community Transport and anon key–decision follow up report on 2016/17 targets for E & E Key Performance Indicators
- Rescheduling Cambourne West Planning Application and Draft S106 Heads of Terms from 19th April to the 14th July meeting

202. DATE OF NEXT MEETING 10A.M.TUESDAY 19th APRIL 2016

Chairman
19TH April 2016